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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 407, 759

SENATOR BAKER: Debate has been ceased. Senator Brashear, you are recognized to close on your amendment.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: Mr. President, thank you. Members of the body, thank you for your time and attention to this issue. I'd like to review. I was present and participating with you yesterday after we'd come off of LB 759, when we seemed to be having some difficulty deciding if and when and to what extent, if at all, we're going to broaden our tax base, as LB 759 provides. And I heard that we wanted to cut more spending. Well, so I'm trying to step up and make an offer that, here's 14 or 12 million dollars of spending we can cut, and do no harm, I will contend, do no harm to anyone, because this is the 14 or 12 million dollars of additional revenue that nobody could have possibly planned on having or already have budgeted the expenditure of, because we... maybe all of you, but at least I'm not willing to concede I even know whether LB 759 is going to pass. But I wanted to meaningfully and substantively participate in the discussion of cutting spending. It appears that there is some understanding among all of us as to what a broadened tax base will do. It's not all bad. In fact, there will be additional revenue. Now, this morning we went forward on what was Senator Beutler and then Senator Bromm's amendment, and we've made some decisions about what further cuts will do to K-12 education and what further cuts will do to the... to higher education. It was my understanding, as I listened to debate yesterday, I heard a number of you speak with conviction about the fact you wanted no more cuts there. And so it was stepping into that tension between finding some more cuts and not cutting K-12 and not cutting higher education, that I thought we ought to offer this, because I would defend for a long time, to the extent you'd let me, this is new revenue. And to the extent that you would have cities rebating their aid and not taking state aid, and it being made whole by new sales tax revenue, they would not be damaged. Nevertheless, like anybody who's ever been here, yesterday I (laugh) suffered one huge defeat on something I was trying to do. And I don't need to be hit over the head a second time. But I will defend the fact that we've discussed this, because I know exactly what would have happened if we hadn't discussed it. Thirty days or sixty days after the close of the session, somebody would be talking about, you know,